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Rhode Island Education Circulars.

FIRE DRILLS IN THE SCHOOLS OF RHODE ISLAND



COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

1912

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LAW GOVERNING FIRE DRILLS IN THE SCHOOLS OF RHODE ISLAND

CHAPTER 797, PUBLIC LAWS, 1912

AN ACT IN AMENDMENT OF AND IN ADDITION TO CHAPTER 68 OF THE GENERAL LAWS, ENTITLED "OF TEACHERS."

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 68 of the General Laws, entitled "Of Teachers," is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections to be numbered consecutively 9, 10, 11 and 12, and to read as follows:

"Sec. 9. It shall be the duty of the principal or other person in charge of every public school or private school or educational institution within the State, having more than twenty-five pupils, to instruct and train the pupils by means of drills, so that they may in a sudden emergency be able to leave the school building in the shortest possible time and without confusion or panic. Such drills or rapid dismissals shall be held at least once each month.

"Sec. 10. Neglect by any principal or any person in charge of any public or private school or educational institution to comply with the provisions of this article shall be a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not exceeding fifty dollars.

"Sec. 11. It shall be the duty of the commissioner of public schools to formulate a uniform fire code or drill tactics to be used in all schools in accordance with the two preceding sections, and to furnish a sufficient number of copies thereof for use in all schools.

"Sec. 12. The provisions of Sections 9 and 10 shall not apply to colleges or universities or to evening schools."

SEC. 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage, and all acts and parts of acts inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

20.2.12/9/14
20/11/19/20

FIRE DRILLS IN SCHOOLS

The various school buildings throughout the State differ greatly in size, height, number of exits, width of stairways and number of rooms, but the purpose of a fire drill will be accomplished in any building if the following general rules are observed:

1. The pupils at all times should pass into and out of the room and the building in an orderly manner.

2. Each teacher should practice with his pupils to see how quickly they can leave the room in an orderly manner by the nearest exit. After he has found the most orderly and the quickest way of passing, he should then be ready to act in harmony with the principal of the building and follow his directions explicitly.

3. There should be a gong or bell in each building to sound as a signal for the drill. The exits to be used may be determined by the number of strokes on the gong or by the ringing of the bell.

4. The code of signals for each exit should be placed permanently in a conspicuous place on the blackboard in each room, and the pupils should be drilled to respond instantly to the signals without direction or command from the teacher.

5. The teachers on the lower floor should have the pupils pass promptly and rapidly to make room for those on the floors above.

6. Great care should be exercised to prevent crowding on the stairways. The width of the stairways should determine whether the pupils should pass in single file or two or more abreast.

7. Provision should be made not only for clearing the building when all the pupils are in the study rooms, but when they are scattered throughout the building in small rooms for recitations. Be prepared for prompt action at any hour or minute of the day.

8. It should be the duty of someone to see that no child is left in any closet or dressing room opening out of the schoolroom.

9. A record, giving the hour of the drill, the number of children and teachers in the building, the time occupied in the drill, and the number of exits used should be filed on a blank provided for that purpose.

10. The entire matter involves careful planning and prompt and systematic execution on the part of the principal and the teachers as no one knows when the efficiency of the drill may be tested.

CODE OF SIGNALS

I

For a building of one room and for a building of two rooms where both rooms use the same exits, two strokes on the gong, repeated twice, indicate that all exits are to be used; one stroke on the gong, followed after a short interval by two strokes, this signal repeated twice, indicates that the exit or exits at the right hand side of the room, as the pupil sits at his desk, are to be used; two strokes on the gong, followed after a short interval by one stroke, this signal repeated twice, indicates that the exit or exits on the left hand side of the room, as the pupil sits at his desk, are to be used.

Code of Signals.—Vertical lines indicate strokes on the gong, and horizontal lines indicate intervals between strokes: 11-11-11, all exits; 1-11-1-11-1-11, exits on right side; 11-1-11-1-11-1, exits on left side.

II

For buildings of three or more rooms, with front and side entrances, two strokes on the gong, repeated twice, indicate that all exits are to be used; one stroke on the gong, followed after a short interval by two strokes, this signal repeated twice, indicates that the exit or exits at the right hand side of the building, as the pupil faces the front en-

trance, are to be used; two strokes of the gong, followed after a short interval by one stroke, this signal repeated twice, indicates that the exit or exits on the left hand side of the building, as the pupil faces the front entrance, are to be used.

Code of Signals.—Vertical lines indicate strokes on the gong, and horizontal lines indicate intervals between strokes. 11-11-11, all exits. 1-11-1-11-1-11, exits on right side. 11-1-11-1-11-1, exits on left side.

III

For buildings of four or more rooms, with front, side and rear exits, two strokes on the gong, repeated twice, indicate that all exits are to be used; one stroke on the gong, followed after a short interval by two strokes, this signal repeated twice, indicates that the exits on one end of the building are to be used; two strokes on the gong, followed after a short interval by one stroke, this signal repeated twice, indicates that the exits at the opposite end of the building are to be used; three strokes on the gong, followed after a short interval by one stroke, this signal repeated twice, indicates that the exits at the rear entrance are to be used; one stroke on the gong, followed after a short interval by three strokes, this signal repeated twice, indicates that the front entrances are to be used.

Code of Signals.—Vertical lines indicate strokes on the gong, and horizontal lines indicate intervals between strokes. 11-11-11, all exits. 1-11-1-11-1-11, exits at one end. 11-1-11-1-11-1, exits at opposite end. 111-1-111-1-111-1, exits at the rear entrances. 1-111-1-111-1-111, exits at the front entrance.

SUGGESTIONS

Teachers should not be satisfied with the results of fire drills in their schools until order and precision similar to that practiced in military organizations is secured and maintained. The drill should be practiced so frequently that no confusion will appear in the ranks

when passing, and that no pupil will be uncertain as to what direction he is to take or when he is to start.

From recorded experience in this connection one may be justified in assuming that children will do in an emergency just what they have been trained to do in preparation for such an event. If they are drilled to get their clothing before leaving the building when the signal is given for a drill, they will get their clothing, probably, if the signal was for a fire. If they are allowed to go into the building after a drill, without orders to do so, they may enter the building when there is a fire, unless the effects of the fire are visible. Other possibilities of a similar character should be considered by teachers when they prepare and execute the drill.

FORM OF REPORT THAT MAY BE USED

TOWN OF.....

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Report of Fire Drill held at.....School

.....19

.....Teachers and.....Pupils present in.....Rooms

Time of Alarm.....M. Exits used.....

Building cleared in.....minutes.

Remarks:

.....Principal

A report should be sent to the Superintendent on the day of the drill.

Gaylord Bros.

Makers

Syracuse, N. Y.

PAT. JAN. 21, 1908

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